

Cornell University

John S. Knight Institute for Writing in the Disciplines

Document Title: Integrating Quotations in Academic Writing
Author: Jo Johnson

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Course Title: Language, Thought, and Reality: Metaphors We Live By

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Spring 2009 Knight Award for Writing Exercises and Handouts

The Knight Award for Writing Exercises recognizes excellence in short exercises and/or handouts designed to improve student writing. Appropriate topics may be drawn from the whole range of writing issues, large scale to small scale, such as development of theses, use of secondary sources, organization of evidence, awareness of audience, attention to sentence patterns (e.g., passive/active voice; coordination/ subordination), attention to diction, uses of punctuation, attention to mechanics (e.g., manuscript formats, apostrophes). Exercises and handouts may be developed for use in and/or out of class.

Submissions should comprise three parts: (1) A copy of the handouts or instructions that go to students. (2) An explanation of the exercise/ handout and of the principles behind it addressed to future instructors who may use the material. (3) If possible, an example of a student response.

Submissions may range in length from one to four or five pages.

Winning Writing Exercises and Handouts will be deposited in a web accessible archive and made available to other instructors under a creative commons attribution, non-commercial license. (See creativecommons.org for more information about cc licensing.)

The two winning entries will receive \$350; honorable mentions (if any) will receive \$125.

Submissions are due in 101 McGraw Hall by Friday, May 8. No exceptions can be made.

Spring 2009 Knight Award for Writing Exercises and Handouts

~Please Print Clearly~

Instructor's name JOANNE JOHNSON

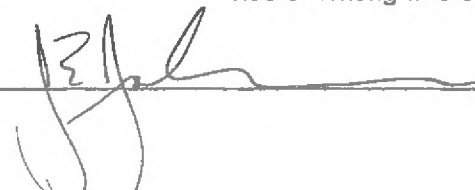
Department LING Course # and title LING 1101.101 METAPHORS WE LIVE BY

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INTEGRATING QUOTATIONS IN ACADEMIC WRITING

Title of Writing Exercises

Instructor's signature



Date 5/8/09

Spring 09 Knight Award for Writing Exercises and Handouts

Submission: Integrating Quotations in Academic Writing

Jo Johnson, Instructor, LING 1101.101 Metaphors We Live By

I developed this handout with integrated exercises in response to a problem I had frequently seen arising in students' writing: uncertainty over how to appropriately integrate quotations from secondary sources into their own essays. My hope was that I could provide students with a comprehensive guide not only to the mechanics of incorporating quotation into their writing, but also to the analytical component of using a quotation to good effect.

I identified four key components contributing to the successful use of quotation and decided to structure the handout in four sections, each addressing one of these four key areas. The first section concerns identifying situations in writing in which use of quotation is appropriate. I structured the advice in this section in bullet points, and used it as a starting point for a class discussion about use of quotation, asking students to imagine scenarios in which they thought quotation would be an effective writing tool. Use of class discussion also seemed more appropriate as a way of breaking into the topic of quotation than simply presenting students "cold" with a set of exercises.

The second section focuses on the grammatical mechanics of appropriately introducing a quotation in a variety of ways. I used passages from a book on the social and cultural history of the English language to illustrate the advice given, which fitted nicely with the fact that at that point in the semester the class was developing an essay on historical linguistics. I also used the same sentence as a source for each example, to show different ways of handling the same material. The handout then provides a short passage from the book and asks students to practice the material just covered by quoting from the passage. After students had completed this we discussed their responses to the exercise. It should be noted that the exercise was also an opportunity to practice reading comprehension: it was evident from the discussion that several students had missed the point of the passage and thought Ostler was arguing that the influence of the USA was responsible for the world-wide spread of English. This was a good opportunity to discuss the fact that successful quotation often depends upon the careful and correct identification of authors' attitudes.

The third section examines appropriate analytical and contextual content of introductions to quotations. It forms the basis for a class discussion, followed by a short set of exercises for practice. The exercises required students to understand common problems with the content of introductory material and to provide solutions, thus varying the type of exercise within the handout.

The fourth and final section addresses the form and content of quoted material itself, an often over-looked issue, looking at subjects such as how to omit irrelevant material, the disambiguation of pronouns and preservation of the author's words. It is associated with its own practice exercise.

Overall, I found this handout to be an effective tool for helping students to understand how to use quotation, and I saw a marked improvement in the use of quotation in subsequent essays.